



The Holy See

**ADDRESS OF JOHN PAUL II
TO THE MEMBERS
OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ST PETERSBURG**

Thursday, 27 May 2004

*Mr President,
Honourable Gentlemen,*

The courteous and appreciated gesture that has brought you here today is particularly pleasing to me. It witnesses to the sentiments of reciprocal attention and intense relations that St Petersburg and the Apostolic See have cultivated over the three centuries since the city's foundation.

Welcome!

I thank you, Mr President, for your kind words on behalf of those present and of the entire Legislative Assembly of your splendid city situated on the banks of the River Neva. I accept with gratitude the commemorative medal of your third centenary which you have presented to me today.

Everything in St Petersburg, the gateway to the vast Country of the Russian Federation, speaks of the fruitful cultural, spiritual, artistic and human dialogue between the West and East of Europe. I express the hope that this constructive attitude of openness may continue to exercise its positive influence wholly to the advantage of reciprocal understanding among peoples of different human, religious and spiritual traditions.

As I invoke upon you and your fellow citizens an abundance of God's Blessings, I express to the beloved city of St Petersburg my best wishes for serene prosperity and peace.

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